

CLAIMS

- 1-4. (Canceled.)
5. (Currently amended) A method for use with a bidding apparatus including a computer, a computer-based auction system, the auction system communicatively coupled with sellers and bidders, the system having records indicative of sellers of items and records indicative of bidders for the items and identifying for each item a winning bidder in an auction, the method comprising the steps, ~~performed by a first bidder~~, of:
- by a[[the]] first bidder, selecting a first item;
- by the computer, obtaining information indicative of identities of second bidders other than the first bidder who previously placed respective bids for the first item;
- by the computer, finding second items other than the first item for which bids have been placed by one or more of the second bidders;
- by the first bidder, choosing a second item for which the auction has not yet ended and for which the first bidder has not yet placed a bid; and
- by the first bidder, placing a bid for the second item prior to the end of the auction, the bid higher than any bid previously placed for the second item.
6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 5 wherein the second bidders comprise all other bidders, other than the first bidder, who previously placed respective bids for the first item.
7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 5 wherein the second bidders comprise more than one and less than all other bidders, other than the first bidder, who previously placed respective bids for the first item.
8. (Original) The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of: by the first bidder, winning the auction.
- 9-17. (Canceled)
18. (Currently amended) A method for use with a bidding apparatus including a computer, a computer-based auction system, the auction system communicatively coupled with sellers and bidders, the system having records indicative of sellers of items and records indicative of bidders for the items and identifying for each item a winning bidder in an auction, the

method comprising the steps of:

by a[[the]] searcher, selecting a first item;

by the computer, obtaining information indicative of identities of second bidders other than the first bidder who previously placed respective bids for the first item;

by the computer, finding second items other than the first item for which bids have been placed by one or more of the second bidders;

by the searcher, communicating the second items to a first bidder;

by the first bidder, choosing a second item for which the auction has not yet ended and for which the first bidder has not yet placed a bid; and

by the first bidder, placing a bid for the second item prior to the end of the auction, the bid higher than any bid previously placed for the second item.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of: by the first bidder, winning the auction.
20. (Original) A method for use with a bidding apparatus including a computer, a computer-based auction system, the auction system communicatively coupled with sellers and bidders, the system having records indicative of sellers of items and records indicative of bidders for the items and identifying for each item a winning bidder in an auction, the method comprising the steps of:

for a user, identifying instances of a bidder bidding on an item that the user has bid on;

if the number of such instances exceeds a predetermined threshold, adding that bidder to a list of bidders of interest.
21. (Original) The method of claim 20 further comprising the step, performed by the user, of manually adding a bidder to the list of bidders of interest.
22. (Original) The method of claim 20 further comprising the steps of:

identifying by the computer, items for which an auction is pending, upon which one or more of the bidders from the list has bid; and

by the user, bidding upon one of the identified items.

23. (Original) A method for use with a bidding apparatus including a computer, a computer-based auction system, the auction system communicatively coupled with sellers and bidders, the system having records indicative of sellers of items and records indicative of bidders for the items and identifying for each item a winning bidder in an auction, the method comprising the steps of:

for a user, identifying instances of a seller offering an item that the user has bid on;

if the number of such instances exceeds a predetermined threshold, adding that seller to a list of sellers of interest.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23 further comprising the step, performed by the user, of manually adding a seller to the list of sellers of interest.

25. (Original) The method of claim 23 further comprising the steps of:

identifying by the computer, items for which an auction is pending, for which the seller is one of the sellers from the list; and

by the user, bidding upon one of the identified items.